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Subj: Monthly Activities Report

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES REPORT
ALAMOSA/MONTE VISTA NWR
August, 1990

INTRODUCTION

Early August was extremely wet for the normally arid San Luis Valley. A total of 1.28 inches was received during the month which is 0.15 inches above normal for August. Total precipitation for the year has been 7.34 inches. The high temperature was 87 on August 29 and the low was 37 degrees on August 8.

WATER

The Alamosa NWR continued to maintain fairly good wetland conditions throughout the month with a total of 1787 acre feet of water diverted. This compares with 1540 acre feet in August 1989. The Colorado Division of Wildlife provided 163 acre feet of water to the Alamosa NWR between August 8 and August 14. This water originated from Road Canyon Reservoir which required a water release for dam repairs. This 186 acre feet is included in the monthly total.

The Monte Vista NWR received a total of 1086 acre feet of diverted and well water during the month of August which was used for both farm irrigation and wetland maintenance. This compares with 1906 acre feet in August 1989. Only very minimal brood habitat existed throughout this refuge during August.

WILDLIFE

Waterfowl production surveys were completed for both refuges. On Alamosa NWR, an estimated 2,936 ducks were produced (vs. 5,614 ducks in 1989). On Monte Vista NWR an estimated 8,366 ducks were produced (vs. 17,243 ducks in 1989). Lack of sufficient water in early spring for pair habitat likely contributed to low nest densities, particularly on Monte Vista NWR. Brood habitat in late summer was minimal on Monte Vista NWR contributing to high brood loss and low average brood size of Class IIc & III ducklings (4.8); consequently, production was low in 1990.

Two sandhill cranes were observed on August 23 on Monte Vista NWR, signalling the initiation of fall migration of the Rocky Mountain Greater Sandhill Crane population through the San Luis Valley.

EXTENSION PROGRAM

Assistant Manager Schnaderbeck applied to the Corps of Engineers for 404 permits concerning numerous wetland development projects on private lands. Corps personnel field inspected each of the proposed projects and permits were received for all projects by the end of the month.

Two cost share projects were submitted for the Service's Private Partnership Program. Both projects involve wetland developments in the north end of the Valley.

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Assistant Manager Schnaderbeck met with personnel from Ducks Unlimited, Colorado DOW, and private landowners to discuss a wetland restoration/enhancement project in Saguache County. All personnel were impressed with the area and are eager to work together on the proposed project.

Rich
The wintering waterfowl project began to take shape this month. Assistant Manager Schnaderbeck met with numerous landowners who have agreed to provide open water roost areas, feeding areas, and also close the former to hunting. The response of our news release concerning hail damage barley fields has been excellent. Some of the damaged fields have at least 80 bushels/acre of barley shattered to the ground by hail. Most landowners have agreed on a \$12/acre payment not to manipulate the stubble of these fields until March 15, 1991. This should prove to be a very economical way to provide feed for waterfowl. Despite the success of hail damage barley program, we are very concerned that a lack of funds will preclude the purchase of small acres of standing grain which will be desperately needed if heavy snows prevent waterfowl from feeding in barley stubble fields.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Berlinger, Brock, Schnaderbeck and Morkill all attended the zone meeting at Flint Hills NWR on August 1 - 2.

Flint Hills NWR transferred to this station a case tractor Model 1494 which was manufactured in 1984.

Station hearing tests were completed for all employees throughout the month of August.

An interagency law enforcement coordination meeting for the State of Colorado was held in Glenwood Springs. It was attended by refuge personnel from all three Colorado refuges and Division of Wildlife officers associated with these refuges as well as SRA Neill Hartman from Denver. Berlinger, Brock and Schnaderbeck attended the meeting which was hosted by this station.

Good job (coordination) Steve.

A station safety meeting was held on August 13 with the subject covering a general discussion of shop equipment use and safety.

The station staff participated in a two day planning meeting with the San Luis Valley Waterbird Planning committee held at the Alamosa NWR office. This two day meeting on August 21 - 22 covered prioritize water needs for key wetland areas in the San Luis Valley. Zone Supervisor Ray Rauch and Regional Migratory Bird Coordinator John Cornely also attended. This has been a very successful inter-agency working group including Colorado DOW, USFWS, BLM, and a retired CSU Professor.

John & Mary
On August 23, Bio. Technician Morkill assisted CSU graduate student Dave Gilbert in groundtruthing 1985 aerial photos of Monte Vista NWR. Vegetation types within each unit were checked and verified; and subsequently, acreages of various habitat types will be accurately measured and compared to 1969 and 1978 photos to document historical changes. Relationships between historical management activities, waterfowl nesting parameters, and habitat changes are being evaluated by Gilbert.

The work on the new auto tour route including placement of rock base, grading,